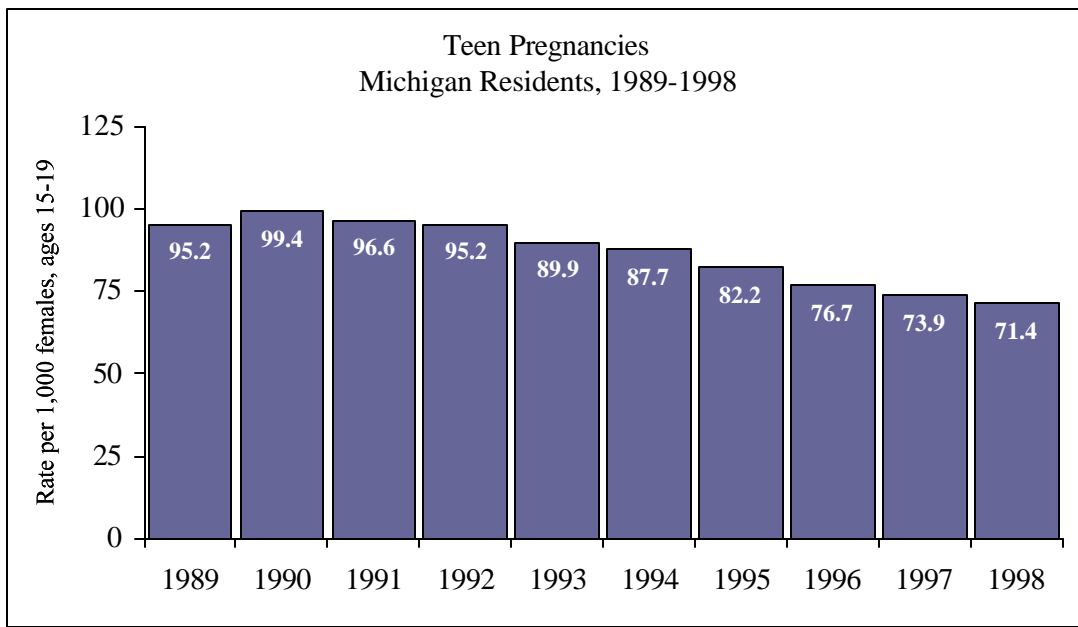


Focused Indicators

Health Risk Behaviors *Teen Pregnancy*



Source: Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics, MDCH

How are we doing?

The teen pregnancy rate is an estimate of the proportion of women aged 15-19 who had a live birth, induced abortion, or miscarriage during a given year. Teen mothers are more likely than adult mothers to be high school drop outs, be unemployed, and lack parenting skills. In addition to increased lifetime risk of social and economic disadvantage to both the teens and their children, there are many health risks to the infants. These include increased risk of low birthweight, pre-term delivery, fetal distress, and other adverse outcomes.

There were an estimated 24,266 pregnancies among Michigan teenagers in 1998, resulting in a rate of 71.6 per 1,000 females, age 15-19 years old. Teen pregnancy rates have declined almost 27 percent since 1990 when the rate peaked at 98.5.

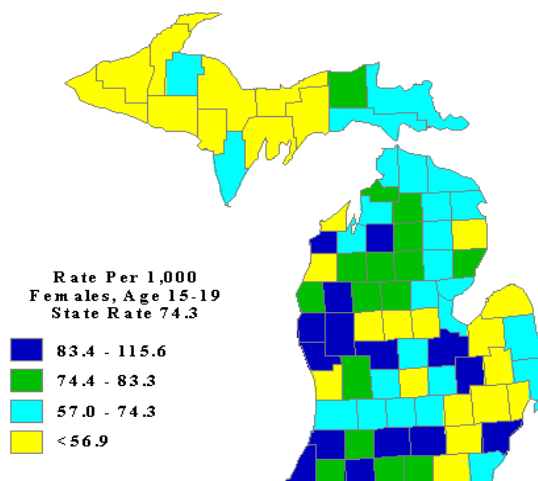
How does Michigan compare with the U.S.?

In 1995, the most recent year for which national figures are available, the Michigan teen pregnancy rate of 79.2 was lower than the U.S. rate of 103.

How are different populations affected?

Pregnancy rates for ages 15-17 are lower than for those ages 18-19, and both rates have been declining in recent years. Pregnancy rates for ages 15-17 decreased from 61.9 in 1990 to 40.8 in 1998. For those aged 18-19, pregnancy rates have decreased from 148.1 in 1990 to 116.5 in 1998.

**Teen Pregnancy Rates
1996-1998 County Averages**



What other information is important to know?

Few teens who become pregnant intend to do so. Estimates from a 1996 Michigan Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey indicate that about 84.3 percent of births to teens were unintended. Factors that may contribute to teen pregnancies include lack of health and sex education, alcohol or drug use, history of sexual abuse, low socioeconomic status, lack of or inconsistent birth control practices, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and low self-determination.

What is the Department of Community Health doing to affect this indicator?

The department is actively working to prevent teen pregnancies through family planning services and efforts of the Michigan Abstinence Partnership. Family planning providers, through contracts with the department, offer contraceptives and reproductive health services to encourage fertility control. The strong educational and counseling components of the programs help to reduce health risks and promote healthy behaviors. These services include encouraging abstinence and parental involvement as appropriate for sexually-active teens.

The Michigan Abstinence Partnership, developed by the department in 1993, is a broad-based group of people from across the state committed to encouraging young people to stay healthy by avoiding risky behaviors such as sexual activity. The partnership funds state and local abstinence activities targeted to youth and families in their communities. The group aims to positively impact adolescent health problems by promoting abstinence from sexual activity among the 9-14 year-old population. The partnership has had a successful, award-winning media campaign to educate both children and their parents. Using the theme **ASex Can Wait**, children are educated about the consequences of sexual activity and parents are

encouraged to talk with their children about these important issues. Additional program components include funding for local coalition activity, parent groups, and program evaluation. In 1998, approximately 160,000 youths, 9 to 14 years old, and their parents participated in local coalition-driven activities, educational programs, and media campaigns.

Recently, Michigan was one of the first states awarded a federal bonus from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in recognition of the state's significant reduction in out-of-wedlock births. The bonus program was established by the 1996 federal welfare reform act. The Michigan Abstinence Partnership has been an important factor in a combination of intervention activities that led to Michigan's dramatic decline in out-of-wedlock births.

Last updated: February 2000.